The Greek Kitchen

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Amigdalota (Greek Almond Macaroons)

1 pound ground almonds
3/4 cup granulated sugar
2 tablespoons toasted bread crumbs
4 egg whites
1/2 teaspoon lemon juice
Pinch of salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Rose water
Confectioners' sugar

Beat egg whites with salt until stiff, then add lemon juice. Add almonds, sugar and crumbs to egg whites, folding them in gradually. Add vanilla extract.

Cut a brown paper bag to fit a cookie sheet and grease the paper. Drop teaspoon–size macaroons onto paper and bake at 275 degrees F about 20 minutes, checking after 15 minutes so that Amigdalota don't burn.

Brush cookies with rose water when they come out of the oven. Loosen them from paper by moistening the paper slightly and lifting off macaroons. Sift confectioners' sugar over them and let cool.

Athenian Salad (Salata Athenas)

1 medium head lettuce
1 bunch romaine
10 radishes, sliced
1 medium cucumber, sliced
6 scallions (with tops), cut into 1/2–inch pieces
1/2 cup olive or vegetable oil
1/3 cup wine vinegar
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
24 Greek or ripe green olives
1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
1 (2 ounce) can rolled anchovies with capers, drained

Tear lettuce and romaine into bite–size pieces. Place lettuce, romaine, radishes, cucumber and scallions in large plastic bag. Close bag tightly and refrigerate. Shake oil, vinegar, salt and oregano in tightly covered jar; refrigerate.

Just before serving, shake dressing. Add dressing and olives to vegetables in bag. Close bag tightly and shake until ingredients are well coated. Pour salad into large bowl; top with cheese and anchovies.

Yields 8 servings.

Athenian Stuffed Peppers

1 pound ground beef
1 cup rice
2 onions, ground
1 clove garlic, minced
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste, divided
1 1/2 tablespoons salt, divided
3/4 teaspoon pepper, divided
1/2 teaspoon oregano
1 egg, well beaten
8 green bell peppers
6 cups water
5 medium potatoes, sliced

Combine meat, rice, onions, garlic, oil, 1 tablespoon tomato paste, 1 tablespoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, oregano and egg. Wash green peppers; cut and remove seeds. Fill peppers with meat mixture; place open side down in circle in roasting pan.

Combine remaining ingredients except potatoes; pour over peppers. Place potatoes in center of pan. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes at 400 degrees F.

Baklava

2 pounds phyllo
2 pounds walnuts, chopped
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup granulated sugar
1/2 pound butter

Mix together chopped nuts, cinnamon and sugar. Grease an 18–inch baking pan and line with 6 layers of phyllo. Cover with thin layer of nut mixture, then top with 1 layer of phyllo. Repeat until all nut mixture is used. Top with 6 layers of phyllo. Cut into diamond–shaped pieces. Place a clove bud in each diamond shape. Pour melted butter over all. Bake 1 1/2 to 2 hours at 300 degrees F until brown, then reduce to 250 degrees F.

Remove from oven and pour cool syrup over all.

Syrup
1 cup honey
2 cups granulated sugar
2 cups water
1 cinnamon stick
2 slices lemon

Boil for 25 minutes and let cool. Pour COOL syrup over HOT Baklava!

Chandler Greek Festival Spanakopita

2 pounds fresh spinach
1 onion, finely chopped
4 tablespoons butter
1 cup cream sauce
6 eggs, beaten
1 cup feta cheese, finely crumbled
Salt and pepper
Dash of nutmeg
1/2 pound phyllo pastry sheets
Butter, melted

Wash spinach and discard stems. Dry thoroughly on absorbent paper and cut into pieces.

Sauté onion in butter until soft. Add spinach and sauté a few minutes longer. Cool.

Add cream sauce, eggs, cheese and seasonings. Mix well.

Place 7 layers of phyllo pastry sheets in an 11 x 14 x 2–inch pan, brushing each sheet well with melted butter. Add spinach mixture, then place 8 phyllo pastry sheets on filling. Again, butter each sheet well.

Bake at 350 degrees F for about 30 minutes or until crust is golden brown. Cut into small squares before serving.

Makes 16 squares.

Cheese and Honey Pie

Sesame Seed Pastry
16 ounces cream cheese, softened
2 eggs
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup honey
1/2 cup whipping cream
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Prepare Sesame Seed Pastry. Beat cream cheese in large mixer bowl on medium speed until creamy. Add remaining ingredients; beat until light and fluffy. Pour into baked pie shell. Bake at 350 degrees F until firm, 40 to 50 minutes. Refrigerate until serving time. Yields 10 to 12 servings.

Sesame Seed Pastry
1 cup all–purpose flour
1/3 cup butter or margarine, softened
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seed
1/4 teaspoon salt

Mix all ingredients until blended; press firmly and evenly against bottom and side of 9–inch pie plate. Bake at 475 degrees F for 5 minutes.

Faki Soupa (Greek Lentil Soup)

3/4 cup brown lentils
1 large onion, sliced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 (3 ounce) can tomato purée
8 ounces fresh tomatoes, peeled and seeded
Good pinch of oregano
2 tablespoons olive oil
3 3/4 cups water
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste

Cover lentils with cold water and bring to boil. Drain lentils and return to the pan with 1 1/2 pints water, garlic, onion, tomato purée, fresh tomatoes, oregano and olive oil. Bring to a boil and simmer until the lentils are soft. Remove from heat and blend, but stop blending before the mixture gets too smooth. Season to taste.

Galaktoboureko

Syrup
3/4 cup water
1 cup granulated sugar
Juice of 1 lemon
1 edge of orange rind
1 cinnamon stick

Boil for 10 minutes. Cool. Prepare this before making pastry.

Pastry
2 quarts milk
1 cup farina
6 eggs
3/4 pound unsalted sweet butter
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
20 phyllo sheets

Heat milk to scalding. Beat eggs until thick. Add farina and mix. Add mixture to milk with 1/4 pound butter. Heat, stirring, until thickened. Remove from heat. Add vanilla extract.

Melt remaining butter and butter bottom and sides of a 10 x 14 x 2–inch pan. Place 10 buttered phyllo leaves in pan. Pour farina mixture in and cover with remaining phyllo, buttering each leaf as it is laid. Butter the top sheet very well and score into diamond–shaped pieces. Bake at 350 degrees F for 50 to 60 minutes. Pour the COOLED syrup over HOT pastry.

Greek Beef Over Zucchini

1 1/2 pounds stew meat
1 large onion, chopped
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 teaspoon cinnamon
3 small cans tomato sauce
10 to 12 medium zucchini

Slice zucchini lengthwise. Brown in oil and drain. Put onto a large platter. Brown onion until clear. Add meat, then brown. Add tomato sauce and spices and simmer until done. Add water if needed. Pour this over zucchini and serve. Sprinkle on just a bit of cinnamon and grate Romano cheese over the top.

This may be served over spaghetti instead of zucchini.

Greek Butter Biscuits (Koulourakia Voutirou)

3/4 cup butter
3/4 cup granulated sugar
1 egg
2 egg yolks
3 1/2 cups (approximately) flour
1 beaten egg
2 teaspoons baking powder

Cream butter and sugar. Add the egg and egg yolks and beat until light and

fluffy. Add flour – sifted with baking powder– knead to make a soft dough, chill for an hour and form into small rings. Arrange on greased baking sheets, brush with beaten egg and bake in a moderate oven for about 10–12 minutes.

Servings: 40

Greek Butter Cookies

1 cup sliced brown almonds
1 teaspoon baking powder
6 cups flour
1 pound sweet butter
1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
2 egg yolks
1 ounce whiskey
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Soften butter at room temperature until very soft. Beat well with an electric mixer. Add sugar and beat until fluffy and light colored. Add egg yolks and beat thoroughly. Sift flour and baking powder and mix into butter mixture. Add nuts. Sprinkle dough lightly with whiskey and knead thoroughly. Roll out dough and make into desired shape. Bake on a cookie sheet at 350 degrees F for about 20 minutes.

After the cookies have cooled, sprinkle liberally with confectioners' sugar.

Makes about 3 to 3 1/2 dozen.

Greek Chicken

6 skinless chicken breasts
1 large can tomato sauce
1 small can tomato puree
1 can sliced mushrooms
1 can ripe olives
1 tablespoon garlic
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon oregano
1 onion, chopped
1/2 cup wine or brandy (optional)
2 cups uncooked rice
Salt to taste

Wash and remove fat from chicken. Bake in 350 degree F oven for about an hour.

Meanwhile, combine all other ingredients except rice. Put chicken and sauce in a crockpot on LOW heat and cook for at least 4 hours to blend flavors.

Before serving, cook rice according to directions.

Serve chicken and sauce over rice.

Serves 6.

Greek Chicken with Olives

1 (2– to 3–pound) chicken, cut up
3 tablespoons olive oil
5 cloves garlic, chopped
3 yellow onions, chopped
3 cups tomatoes (fresh or canned), chopped
1 (6 ounce) jar green stuffed olives or 3/4 cup salad olives
Black pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon dried oregano (or 2 tablespoons chopped fresh)
1 cup dry red wine
Salt, to taste

Brown chicken in olive oil. Remove chicken and saute garlic and onions until tender. Add tomatoes and olives and saute until tomatoes (if fresh) are soft. Add pepper, oregano, wine, and chicken.

Cover and simmer about 30 minutes, or until tender. Taste for salt, as the olives are salty.

Serves 4 to 6.

Greek Chicken with Rice

1 (3 pound) broiler chicken
1 medium onion, chopped fine
3 cups boiling water
1 1/2 cups canned tomatoes
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/3 cup olive oil
Salt and pepper

Clean chicken thoroughly and cut into pieces.

Heat olive oil in pan and brown chicken on both sides. Add onion, cinnamon, tomato and season to taste. Add 1 cup water; cover and cook over low flame until chicken is almost done.

Remove cover. Add rice and 3 cups boiling water. Cook over low flame until rice is tender. Add more water, if needed. Stir occasionally, but carefully, so as not to break up the chicken pieces.

Remove from heat and allow to stand for a few minutes before serving.

Greek Chocolate Balls

1/2 pound walnut meats
1/2 pound sweet cooking chocolate
9 pieces zwieback
1 1/2 tablespoons granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons rose water
Confectioners' sugar

Put first three ingredients through the fine blade of a food chopper. Add sugar, cinnamon and rosewater. Form into 36 small balls. Roll in confectioners' sugar. Store balls airtight.

Greek Coffee Cake

1 cup butter
1/2 cup margarine
1 2/3 cups granulated sugar
6 eggs
2 cups flour
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 tablespoon orange or lemon juice

Cream butter, margarine and sugar thoroughly. Add eggs; mix well. Add remaining ingredients; mix well. Bake in a greased and floured Bundt pan at 325 degrees F for about 1 hour.

Cool for 10 minutes, remove from pan, and sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.

Greek Farmer's Bread

16 ounces unbleached white flour
4 teaspoons instant yeast
2 teaspoons granulated sugar
2 cups lukewarm water
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 teaspoons salt

Put the flour into a bowl. Make a well in the middle. Put the yeast and the sugar in the well. Pour water over. Mix slightly. Cover and put in a warm place for 15 minutes.

Knead, adding the salt and oil, to a smooth elastic dough. Cover and put in a warm place for 15 minutes.

Knead thoroughly and place on a baking sheet. Cover and put in a warm place for 15 minutes.

Put into a cold oven and turn oven on to 375 degrees F. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes until golden brown. Let cool 20 minutes before slicing.

Greek Fried Cheese (Saganaki)

4 tablespoons butter
1 egg, well beaten
1 teaspoon flour
1/2 pound kasseri cheese*, sliced 1/2 inch thick
2 tablespoons brandy
Juice of 1/2 lemon

Heat the butter in a large heavy skillet over moderate heat. Beat the egg and flour together, and dip the cheese slices into the mixture. Fry until well browned on both sides. Remove from the heat and add the brandy. Carefully ignite the brandy with a match, and shake the skillet until the flame is extinguished. Squeeze the lemon juice over the cheese and serve from the skillet along with crusty bread.

Serves 6 to 8.

Greek Garlice Dip (Skordalia)

6 slices whole wheat or white bread, crusts removed
1/2 cup mashed potatoes
7 cloves garlic, peeled
1/2 cup chopped walnuts or almonds
1 cup extra virgin olive oil
1/2 cup lemon juice, or to taste
Salt and freshly–ground pepper, to taste

Soak the bread in water, then squeeze it to remove as much water as possible. Combine it with the potatoes, garlic, and nuts in an electric food processor and process until it becomes a smooth paste. With the processor running, add the olive oil in a thin stream. Add the lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste. Serve with pita bread and/or raw vegetables for dipping.

Makes about 3 cups.

Greek Goddess Salad

1 head romaine or green–leaf lettuce, rinsed and torn into bite–size pieces
1 medium green bell pepper, thinly sliced (about 1 cup)
2 medium tomatoes, cut into 8 wedges each
1/4 cup pitted, sliced olives, Kalamata or other oil–cured variety (optional)
1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese

Dressing
2 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano or 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

To prepare the dressing: In a small bowl, combine lemon juice, oil, oregano, and pepper. Mix well and set aside.

Dry lettuce thoroughly in a salad spinner or with a double layer of paper towels. Place in a large salad bowl. Add bell pepper, tomatoes, olives, and feta. Pour the dressing over the salad. Toss gently to coat. Divide the salad among serving plates and serve immediately.

Serves 4.

Greek Honey Cream

Yield: 8 servings

1/4 cup coarsely chopped walnuts
1/4 cup coarsely chopped almonds
1/4 cup coarsely chopped cashews
1/4 cup coarsely chopped pistachios
1 cup honey
1 cup chilled whipping cream

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.

Place all nuts in baking pan. Bake until lightly toasted, stirring occasionally, about 15 minutes. Cool completely.

Using electric mixer, beat honey in large bowl until thick and pale, about 2 minutes. Whip cream in another large bowl until stiff peaks form. Fold nuts into cream. Gently fold cream into honey, leaving a few steaks of cream. Cover and refrigerate until well chilled and slightly set, about 2 hours. (Can be prepared 1 day ahead.)

Place dollop of honey cream on each plate. Surround with fruit and serve.

Servings: 8

Greek Hot Potato Salad

4 to 5 large potatoes
1 large onion, sliced
1/2 cup celery, diced
Salt and pepper
1/2 cup olive oil
Juice of 2 lemons
Parsley, chopped

Boil potatoes until tender and keep hot. Slice onion into a large bowl. Sprinkle with salt and cold water, and allow to stand about 5 minutes; drain.

Slice hot potatoes and add to onions. Add olive oil, lemon juice and celery. Mix well to absorb dressing. Season to taste, and garnish with chopped parsley.

Serve warm.

Greek Lentil Soup (Soupa Fakez)

3 cups uncooked lentils
12 to 15 cups hot water
1 cup vegetable oil
4 to 5 cloves garlic
1 onion, minced
2 stalks celery
2 medium carrots, minced
1 sprig rosemary
1 1/2 pounds tomatoes, peeled and strained or
1 (30 ounce) can tomatoes
Salt and pepper, to taste
Vinegar (optional)

Soak the lentils overnight in cold water. Rinse and place in a large pot with plenty of water. Bring to a boil. Drain off this water and replace it with the 12 to 15 cups hot water. Add the remaining ingredients except the tomatoes and salt and pepper. Simmer for 45 minutes, then add the tomatoes and cook for about 20 minutes longer (until the lentils are soft). Season

Serve hot.

Greek Meatballs

2 pounds lean hamburger
1 egg, beaten
2 tablespoons mint leaves
1/2 teaspoon dill flakes
1 teaspoon vinegar
4 slices soft bread
6 cloves garlic, crushed
1 large onion, chopped
Salt and pepper, to taste

Mix all ingredients and form into walnut–size balls. Flour them lightly and brown in oil. Add to sauce. Simmer meatballs and sauce 20 minutes. Add water if needed. The meatballs can be put into grape leaves and simmered in sauce until done.

Sauce
2 (8 ounce) cans tomato sauce
1 onion, chopped
3/4 cup butter
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon cloves
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
2 bay leaves

Greek Pasta Sauce

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 cups chopped onions
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 small bunches fresh spinach, washed well, large stems removed, and coarsely chopped
1/2 cup sliced pitted black olives (preferably Greek olives, such as kalamata)
Juice of 1 lemon
1/2 pound feta cheese, crumbled
Pepper to taste
1 pound cooked penne or other short thick pasta

Heat olive oil in large skillet and cook onions and garlic over medium heat until translucent. Lower heat and add spinach and cook, covered, until wilted, but still green. Add chopped olives, crumbled feta cheese, pepper and lemon juice. Stir in cooked pasta and serve.

Greek Rice Pudding

1/2 cup rice, preferably short–grain
1 cinnamon stick
2 cups water
6 cups milk
1 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch mixed with
2 tablespoons milk
1/2 cup sugar
Zest of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
A grating of fresh nutmeg
Ground cinnamon (for garnish)

Combine rice, cinnamon stick and water in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer covered for 15 minutes.

Add the milk, cornstarch mixture, and sugar to the pan. Increase the heat to moderate and stir constantly until the mixture thickens, about 15 minutes.

Add lemon zest, vanilla extract and nutmeg and stir to combine. Spoon into individual serving bowls or glasses and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Dust with a little cinnamon before serving.

Serves 6 to 8.

Greek Rice with Feta

1/2 teaspoon olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, sliced
1 cup brown rice
3 cups vegetable stock
Salt
Juice and grated zest of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons crumbled feta cheese
1 scallion, sliced
1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro

In a deep sauté pan or saucepan, keep the oil over medium heat and sauté onion and garlic for two to three minutes. Add the rice and continue cooking, stirring, for two minutes, until coated with oil. Add the stock, stirring and scraping the sides of the pan, until the rice is cooked. Season to taste with salt. Cover and simmer over low heat for 25 to 30 minutes. Set aside, covered, to steam for five to six minutes. Uncover and test for doneness. If the liquid is not absorbed in the rice is not tender, return to the stove for a few minutes. Then add the feta, scallions and cilantro. Stir gently just to mix.

Serve immediately.

Greek Salad

1/2 cup extra–virgin olive oil
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
3 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons chopped oregano
Salt and freshly ground pepper
4 romaine lettuce, torn
6 medium tomatoes, cored and cut into wedges
6 cucumbers, peeled and sliced 1/2 inch thick
1/2 pound feta cheese, crumbled (about 1 1/2 cups)
1 cup black olives, pitted (6 ounces)

In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, lemon juice and oregano. Season with salt and pepper.

In a large bowl, combine the romaine, tomatoes, cucumbers, cheese and olives. Toss the salad with the dressing and serve at once.

Servings: 12

Greek Salad

1 bunch Romaine lettuce
1 small red onion
1 cucumber
4 Roma tomatoes
Kalamata olives
Feta cheese, crumbled

Dressing
1/4 cup good olive oil
3 to 4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 or 2 cloves crushed garlic
1 teaspoon dried oregano

Whisk together dressing and let it sit while you prepare the vegetables.

Wash and spin dry lettuce, tear into pieces. Slice onion, tomato and cucumber. Add olives and feta to taste. Whisk dressing before pouring on salad and toss.

Serves 4. Goes well with focaccia bread or pita and hummus.

Greek Salad Dressing

3/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup red wine or white vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon oregano
1/4 teaspoon freshly–ground black pepper

Put all ingredients in small jar; shake thoroughly. Chill before serving.

Greek Seasoning Blend

2 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons dried oregano
1 1/2 teaspoons onion powder
1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder
1 teaspoon cornstarch
1 teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon beef bouillon granules
1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Combine all ingredients; store in an airtight container.

Greek Shrimp

3/4 pound frozen shrimp
1 small onion, chopped
1/2 teaspoon powdered or crushed oregano
1 bay leaf
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 can tomato wedges
1/4 cup dry white wine
1/2 teaspoon salt
Fresh ground pepper, to taste
1 1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
2 to 4 ounces feta cheese, crumbled

Sauté onion and spices in oil, in a skillet or pot that can be served at the table. Drain tomatoes; reserve juice. Chop tomatoes coarsely and add to skillet along with wine, salt and pepper; cook over high heat 5 minutes.

Mix cornstarch and reserved tomato juice and stir in. Cook over medium heat until thickened. Add shrimp and cook on low heat until pink and curled. Remove from heat and stir in cheese. Serve immediately.

Greek Spaghetti

1 pound cooked spaghetti, held warm
1/4 cup olive oil
4 cloves garlic, crushed
4 green onions, sliced thin
1 cup cherry tomatoes, split in half and seeded
1 handful coarsely chopped fresh spinach
1 cup crumbled feta cheese
1 tablespoon oregano
Salt and pepper, to taste
1/4 pound butter

Place the cooked spaghetti in the bowl you are going to serve it in. Heat a sauté pan and quickly sauté in the olive oil the garlic followed by the green onions and then the cherry tomatoes. Lastly, add the spinach and as soon as the spinach is cooked – this only takes a few seconds – pour the whole thing over the spaghetti.

Sprinkle the feta cheese and oregano over the spaghetti and toss like a salad. Season with salt and pepper. Add the butter to the pan you used for sautéing and brown it. Do not burn it, just brown it. Then drizzle over the spaghetti and enjoy.

Greek Style Shrimp

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 small onion, chopped
4 small tomatoes, diced
1 1/2 pounds raw shrimp
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 clove garlic, mashed
1 green bell pepper, diced
1/2 cup dry white wine
1 cup feta cheese

In a saucepan, heat oil. Add garlic, onion and green pepper. Sauté 5 minutes. Add wine and tomatoes. Simmer until thick and pulpy. Stir in shrimp and cook 5 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until shrimp are pink and firm. Season with salt and pepper, if desired. Pour into serving dishes and sprinkle with feta cheese.

Serve with rice, mixed with melted butter, ground cloves and pine nuts.

Greek Twirls Salad

1 (12 ounce) package rainbow twirls macaroni, uncooked
1 cup crumbled feta, Roquefort or blue cheese
1/2 cup chopped black olives
3/4 cup sliced radishes
1/4 cup sliced scallion
1 cup marinated artichoke hearts
1/2 cup olive or vegetable oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon oregano

Cook macaroni according to package directions; drain. In a large bowl, toss hot cooked twirls with cheese, olives, radishes, scallion and artichoke hearts until well blended. In a small bowl, combine remaining ingredients; toss with twirl mixture until evenly coated. Salt and pepper to taste. Chill.

Honey Curls (Diples)

6 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 3/4 cups flour
1/3 cup vegetable oil
4 cups vegetable oil (for deep–frying)

Beat eggs well with vanilla extract. Add flour slowly, kneading lightly. Add the 1/3 cup oil and mix well. Separate dough into five sections. Keep unused portion covered to keep from drying. Roll one part on floured board until paper thin. With pastry wheel, cut into strips 2 inches wide and the length of pastry. Roll on a fork to form circle. Drop into very hot oil in a deep fat fryer so that dough will rise properly. Drain on absorbent paper. Dip Diples in hot syrup; sprinkle with cinnamon and nuts.

Syrup
2 cups honey
1 cup water
2 tablespoons granulated sugar

Boil for 10 to 15 minutes.

Horiatiki (Greek Country Salad)

1 pound tomatoes, diced
1/2 cucumber, peeled and sliced
1 small green pepper, pith and seeds removed, thinly sliced
1 onion, thinly sliced
5 ounces feta cheese
12 black olives
Pinch of oregano
4 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste

Place tomatoes, cucumber, pepper and onion in a bowl. Dress with olive oil, salt and pepper. Arrange feta cheese and olives on the top and sprinkle on the oregano.

Kolokythia Krokettes (Zucchini Pancakes)

3 cups grated zucchini
1 teaspoon salt
3 eggs
1 cup grated feta cheese
1 1/2 teaspoons minced fresh mint leaves
3 tablespoons flour
Pepper
Butter

Mix zucchini with salt and let stand 1 hour. Squeeze out moisture. Beat eggs. Add zucchini, cheese, mint, flour and pepper to taste. Fry 1 tablespoon at a time in butter over medium heat. Brown on both sides.

Makes 18 pancakes or 6 servings.

Kotopoulo Me Elies (Chicken Casserole with Olives)

1 broiler–fryer chicken
3 tablespoons olive oil
2/3 cup red wine
1 stick cinnamon
3 cloves
2 whole allspice
1 bay leaf
1 (14 ounce) can tomatoes
16 black or green olives
Salt and pepper, to taste

Wash and dry chicken; season with salt and pepper and fry in the olive oil. Pour wine into the pan, add spices, bay leaf and tomatoes. Cover and simmer for 1 hour or until the meat is tender. Add olives the last 10 minutes, by which time the sauce should be thick. Serve with rice or pasta.

Make Your Own Gyro Meat

1 pound ground lamb
1/2 cup very finely chopped (or shredded) onion
2 teaspoons fresh minced garlic
3/4 teaspoon salt (preferably sea salt)
1/2 teaspoon dried ground marjoram
1/2 teaspoon dried ground rosemary
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Mix everything together and let sit in the fridge for 1–2 hours.

Blend in a food processor for about 1 minute. (When cooked, this will help give it a more traditional gyro feel on your palate. Otherwise, it just takes like cooked minced meat.)

Form into an oblong around a spit, and slow cook over a grill for around 30–45 minutes, cooking far from the coals, and rotating slowly. Alternatively, bake in the oven in a meatloaf shape for about 45 minutes to 1 hour, at 325 degrees F. It should be a bit dry.

Melomacarina (Greek Cookies)

1 cup (2 sticks) margarine
1/4 cup granulated sugar
1 1/4 cups vegetable oil
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 cup orange juice
1 teaspoon baking soda
4 to 5 cups flour

Beat margarine, sugar and oil. Add baking powder and beat well. Add baking soda to orange juice and stir until foamy, then add to first mixture. Beat well. Add flour — as much as is needed to form cookies. Knead by hand and form cookies in oblong shape. Bake at 375 degrees F on ungreased cookie sheet. When slightly brown on the bottom, remove from oven to let cool.

When cooled, dip cookies in 1/2 honey and 1/2 water which has been brought to a boil. Do this one at a time. Sprinkle with chopped walnuts and sprinkle of cinnamon. Makes about 70 delicious cookies!

Old Fashioned Greek Shortbread

1 pound butter (NO margarine)
2 egg yolks
1 cup confectioners' sugar
1 teaspoon anise
4 to 5 cups flour

Beat butter at medium speed of electric mixer for 10 minutes. Add egg yolks and confectioners' sugar. Beat 5 more minutes. Add anise. Add flour one cup at a time, kneading. Roll dough into 1–inch balls and bake on ungreased cookie sheet at 375 degrees F for 12 to 15 minutes or until very lightly browned.

Dust with confectioners' sugar. Makes 5 or 6 dozen.

Rice with Garbanzos and Currants

4 tablespoons olive oil
2 medium onions, chopped
1 cup long–grain rice
1/4 cup white wine (optional)
2 cups fresh or canned chicken stock, or water
1 (15 ounce) can garbanzo beans (chick–peas, ceci), drained or 1 cup dried garbanzo beans, soaked overnight and boiled for 45 minutes, until tender
1/2 cup dried currants or raisins
Juice of 1 lemon
Salt and freshly–ground pepper, to taste
Chopped parsley (for garnish)

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over moderate heat. Sauté the onions until translucent, about 5 minutes.

Add the rice and stir to thoroughly coat the rice with the oil. Add the optional wine and cook for 2 minutes.

Add the chicken stock or water and the remaining ingredients and simmer covered over low heat for 15 to 20 minutes, until the rice is done.

Sprinkle with the chopped parsley.

Serves 4 to 6.

Skorthalia (Garlic Sauce)

3 slices white bread, crusts removed
Cold water
3 large cloves garlic
Juice of 1/2 lemon or 2 tablespoons white wine vinegar
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup walnuts

Soak bread in cold water for 5 minutes and squeeze dry. Put into a blender with the garlic, lemon juice or wine vinegar and walnuts, if desired, and process well. Gradually pour in the olive oil until you have a sauce the consistency of mayonnaise.

Serve with vegetables or triangles of pita bread for dipping.

Spankopita (Spinach–Cheese Pie)

2 pounds fresh spinach
1 onion, finely chopped
4 tablespoons butter
1 cup cream sauce
6 eggs, beaten
1 cup finely–crumbled feta cheese
Salt and pepper
Dash of nutmeg
1/2 pound phyllo pastry sheets
Butter, melted

Wash spinach and discard stems. Dry thoroughly on absorbent paper and cut into pieces. Sauté onion in butter until soft. Add spinach and sauté a few minutes longer.

Cool. Add cream sauce, eggs, cheese and seasonings. Mix well. Place 7 layers of phyllo pastry sheets in an 11 x 14 x 2–inch pan, brushing each sheet well with melted butter. Add spinach mixture, then place 8 phyllo pastry sheets on filling, again buttering each sheet. Bake at 350 degrees F for about 30 minutes, or until crust is golden brown.

Cut into small squares before serving.

Yields 16 squares.

Spanakorizo (Spinach with Rice)

1 pound spinach
2 medium onions, chopped
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped
1/4 cup rice
1/4 cup olive oil
Salt and pepper
Mint leaves

Sauté onions in heated oil until golden. Add the spinach which has been thoroughly washed and drained. Add a little water and bring to boil. Sprinkle parsley and add the washed rice. Stir; season to taste; allow to simmer for about 15 minutes, or until done.

Spinach with Lemon Dressing (Horta)

1 1/2 pounds fresh spinach
2 tablespoons olive oil or vegetable oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/4 teaspoon salt
Freshly–ground black pepper

Wash spinach very thoroughly to remove all of the grit and remove stems; drain. Place spinach leaves and just the water that clings to them in Dutch oven. Cover and cook until tender, 7 to 8 minutes; drain thoroughly. Shake oil, lemon juice and salt in tightly covered jar; toss with spinach. Sprinkle with pepper.

Yields 6 servings.

Spinach with Rice (Spanakouzo)

1 (10 ounce) package chopped spinach, thawed
1 medium onion, chopped
1/4 cup olive oil
1 (8 ounce) can tomato sauce
2 tablespoons lemon juice
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 1/2 cups water
1/2 cup long grain rice

Sauté onion in olive oil in saucepan until tender. Add tomato sauce, lemon juice and water. Bring to boil. Add spinach, rice and season with salt and pepper. Cover and simmer 20 minutes or until rice is absorbed.

Makes 4 servings.

This recipe can easily be doubled.

Strava

Syrup
3 pounds honey
1 cup water
1 cup granulated sugar

Bring the ingredients to a boil. Set aside to cool.

Pastry
1 cup olive oil
2 pounds plain flour
Water

Rub oil into flour and add sufficient water to make a soft dough. Knead for at least 10 minutes until dough is smooth in texture and whitish in color. Divide into 3 sections. Roll out fairly thin. Brush with olive oil. Combine filling ingredients. Sprinkle pastry all over with Nut–Coconut Filling and roll up firmly. Cut on oblique lines at approximately 3–inch intervals.

Heat oil and cook pastry for about 12 minutes. Place in colander to drain off surplus oil. Place Strava in honey mixture and leave for 10 minutes.

Makes 60 Strava.

Nut–Coconut Filling
1 pound walnut pieces
1 cup shredded coconut
1 level teaspoon ground cloves
1 level teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 level teaspoon cinnamon
1 pound almond pieces
1 cup granulated sugar
Peanut oil (for frying)

Tomato Pilaf

2 medium tomatoes, coarsely chopped
2 tablespoons chopped onion
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 cups water
1 cup uncooked regular rice
1 teaspoon instant beef bouillon
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Cook and stir tomatoes and onions in butter in 2–quart saucepan over medium heat for 2 minutes. Stir in remaining ingredients. Heat to boiling, stirring once or twice; reduce heat. Cover and simmer 14 minutes without lifting cover or stirring.

Remove from heat. Fluff rice lightly with fork; cover and let steam 5 to 10 minutes. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese if desired.

Yields 8 servings.

Traditional Greek Lamb in Egg Lemon Sauce

2 pounds lamb shoulder
1/4 cup butter
1 teaspoon dry dill weed or 1 tablespoon fresh dill
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
6 bunches scallions, chopped
1 1/2 cups water

Trim excess fat from meat and cut into stew pieces. Place in deep saucepan over high heat. Add butter and seasonings. Brown meat well until juices are absorbed. Add green scallions. Cover and cook over low heat until soft. Add water. Continue cooking slowly for 1 1/2 to 2 hours or until meat is done. Serve with Egg Lemon Sauce.

Egg Lemon Sauce
3 eggs, well beaten
2 lemons, juiced
1 cup hot chicken broth

Beat eggs until light and fluffy. Add lemon juice slowly, beating well. Gradually add hot broth, beating constantly at low speed.

Tzatziki (Greek–Turkish)

4 cucumbers
3 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 cups yogurt, or yogurt and sour cream mixed

Peel and seed the cucumbers, and put through a fine grater (not a blender). Allow to drain in a colander until the juices have stopped running.

In a small bowl, mash the garlic with the olive oil, salt and pepper. Stir in the cucumbers and yogurt. Chill, covered, for 1 hour or more.

Serve as a dip with crackers or raw vegetables.

Xoriatiki (Greek "Village" Salad)

Serves 6

4 ripe tomatoes
1 cucumber
1 onion
1 green bell pepper
Olives
Capers
Oregano
Salt
1/3 pound feta cheese, crumbles
1/2 cup olive oil

Cut the vegetables into slices and mix in a salad bowl. Top with the olives, capers and oregano and cover with crumbled feta cheese. Pour the olive oil evenly over the top.

Zesty Chicken Oregano (Kotopoulo me Riganates Skaras)

1 (2 1/2 to 3 pound) broiler– fryer chicken, cut up
1/2 cup olive oil or vegetable oil
1/4 cup lemon juice
2 teaspoons dried oregano leaves
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 clove garlic, chopped
Lemon slices

Place chicken in ungreased 13 x 9–inch baking pan. Mix remaining ingredients except lemon slices; pour over chicken. Bake uncovered at 375 degrees F, spooning oil mixture over chicken occasionally, 30 minutes.

Turn chicken; cook until thickest pieces are done, about 30 minutes longer. Garnish with lemon slices.

Yields 6 to 8 servings.